

Testimony in Support of HB 93

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This past year, the Legislative Audit Division reported the results of an Emergency Medical Services performance audit to the Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Interim Committee. The interim committee recognized in this audit that several issues needed legislative cleanup.

- 1) There are several definitions of medical direction in current law and rule which are similar but confusing to interpret. Section 5 of this bill consolidates them into two definitions: 1) offline medical direction or the general medical oversight and supervision of an emergency medical technician or emergency medical service (eg. protocols, review of past calls, training); and 2) online medical direction; the direction, advice or orders given to EMTs, generally over the phone or radio as an EMS service responds to medical emergencies.
- 2) Over much of the last 30 years, the role of overseeing EMT licensing was delegated to DPHHS through an agreement of understanding. A few years ago, the oversight of EMT licensing has been taken up again by the Board of Medical Examiners (BOME) and HB 93 clarifies the role of each agency - BOME for EMT licensing and oversight; DPHHS for the licensing and broad oversight of EMS services.
- 3) DPHHS and BOME regulatory and oversight functions are typically separate – most EMT and EMS service actions are generally exclusive of each other. However, HB 93 clarifies

how complaints about EMTs and EMS services will be handled, especially when there is a matter of mutual interest:

- Currently the public is confused about which of our agencies may be responsible for a complaint and where to send complaints to. HB 93 directs that all complaints will go to a screening panel at the Board of Medical Examiners for initial review. Then, we as agencies will sort out who is responsible and what steps to take.
- Upon receipt of a complaint, the screening panel will assign it to the appropriate agency; EMT complaints to the BOME and EMS service complaints to DPHHS. When a combination of EMT and EMS service matters are at issue, it will be referred to both agencies for coordination of an investigation.
- HB 93 requires that information from complaints and investigations be shared between agencies as appropriate. Under current administrative processes, it's unclear how to balance public safety and provider privacy. The BOME, in particular, has a strong responsibility for the privacy of the licensed individual. HB 93 makes it clear the each agency will share information about relevant investigation discoveries or complaint resolution of mutual concern.

These statute changes were developed through collaborative discussions between DPHHS and the Board of Medical Examiners. We appreciate the interim committee drafting HB 93 and we thank Representative Sands for sponsoring it. We would appreciate this committee's support also. Thank you.